

# 2007 Instructions for Form 541-QFT

## California Income Tax Return for Qualified Funeral Trusts (QFTs)

References in these instructions are to the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) as of **January 1, 2005**, and to the California Revenue and Taxation Code (R&TC).

### What's New

#### Round Cents to Dollars

Beginning with the 2007 tax forms, round cents to the nearest whole dollar. For example, round \$50.50 up to \$51 or round \$25.49 down to \$25. If you do not round, FTB will disregard the cents. This change helps process your returns quickly and accurately.

### General Information

In general, California law conforms to the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) as of **January 2005**. However, there are continuing differences between California and federal law. When California conforms to federal tax law changes, we do not always adopt all of the changes made at the federal level. For more information, go to our Website at [www.ftb.ca.gov](http://www.ftb.ca.gov) and search for **conformity**. Additional information can be found in FTB Pub. 1001, Supplemental Guidelines to California Adjustments, the instructions for California Schedule CA (540 or 540NR), and the Business Entity tax booklets.

The instructions provided with California tax forms are a summary of California tax law and are only intended to aid taxpayers in preparing their state income tax returns. We include information that is most useful to the greatest number of taxpayers in the limited space available. It is not possible to include all requirements of the California Revenue and Taxation Code (R&TC) in the tax booklets. Taxpayers should not consider the tax booklets as authoritative law.

#### Internet Access

You can download, view, and print California tax forms and publications from our Website at [www.ftb.ca.gov](http://www.ftb.ca.gov).

Access other state agencies' Websites through the State Agencies Directory on California's Website at [www.ca.gov](http://www.ca.gov).

### A Purpose

The trustee of a trust that has elected to be taxed as a qualified funeral trust (QFT) can use this form to file for a single QFT or for multiple QFTs having the same trustee, following the rules discussed under General Information D, Composite Return.

An election to file as a QFT for federal purposes is considered an election for California purposes. A separate election is not allowed.

Trustees must use Form 541-QFT to:

- Report income received by a QFT.
- Report income that is either accumulated or distributed currently to the beneficiaries.
- Report any applicable tax liability of the fiduciary.
- File an amended return for the QFT.

Pre-need funeral trusts that do not qualify as QFTs should get the instructions for Form 541, California Fiduciary Income Tax Return, for their filing requirements.

For tax purpose, a trust will generally be regarded as a separate entity. However, if there is an unlawful shifting of income from the individual who has earned that income to a trust, the trust will no longer be treated as a separate entity and the income will be taxed to the individual who earned the income. If the individual who established the trust has a substantial ability to control the assets, all of the income will be taxed to that individual. Unless specifically allowed by the California R&TC and the IRC, deduction of personal living expenses by an individual or trust is not allowed.

### B Qualified Funeral Trust

A QFT is a domestic trust that meets all of the following requirements:

- Arises as a result of a contract with a person engaged in the trade or business of providing funeral or burial services or property to provide such services.
- The sole purpose of the trust is to hold, invest, and reinvest funds in the trust and to use those funds solely to pay for funeral or burial services or property to provide such services for the benefit of the beneficiaries of the trust.
- The only beneficiaries are individuals for whom such services or property are to be provided at their death under the contracts described above.
- The aggregate contributions to the trust on behalf of any single beneficiary do not exceed the contribution limit (see General Information C, Contribution Limit, in the next column), and are made by or for the beneficiaries' benefit.
- The trustee makes the election to treat the trust as a QFT.
- If the QFT election had not been made, the trust would have been treated as owned by the purchasers of the contracts under the grantor trust provisions of the IRC.

If a QFT has multiple beneficiaries, each beneficiary's separate interest under a contract is treated as a separate QFT for the purpose of figuring the tax and filing this return. Each beneficiary's share of the trust's income is determined in accordance with the beneficiary's interest in the trust. A beneficiary's interest in a trust may be determined under any reasonable method.

Whenever these instructions refer to a trust or QFT, it includes such separate interests that are treated as separate QFTs.

### C Contribution Limit

#### How to determine your contribution limit

To meet the contribution limit, first determine your contribution limit amount. You determine this amount in the year in which an individual enters into a contract with a person engaged in the trade or business of providing funeral or burial services or property to provide these services.

| For contracts entered in . . . | your contribution limit amount is . . . |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1998 and before                | \$7,000                                 |
| 1999                           | 7,100                                   |
| 2000                           | 7,200                                   |
| 2001                           | 7,500                                   |
| 2002                           | 7,700                                   |
| 2003                           | 7,800                                   |
| 2004                           | 8,000                                   |
| 2005                           | 8,200                                   |
| 2006                           | 8,500                                   |
| 2007                           | 8,800                                   |

#### How to determine if a trust meets the contribution limit

A trust meets the contribution limit if one of the following applies:

- Contributions do not exceed the contribution limit amount.
- ~~The trust, over its life, does not expect to receive future contributions that exceed the contribution limit amount.~~

Projections for future contributions are based on the following:

- Existing contributions.
- Applicable California law regarding trust contribution requirements.
- Any expected contributions in excess of California law requirements.

#### When to determine the contribution limit

Make the determination at the inception of the trust and again if the projected amount for future contributions changes.

#### Losing QFT status

A trust loses its QFT status at the time it exceeds or is projected to exceed its contribution limit amount.

#### Multiple beneficiaries

If a QFT has multiple beneficiaries, the contribution limit applies separately to each beneficiary. Each beneficiary's share of the total contributions to a trust is determined by the beneficiary's interest in the trust. A beneficiary's interest in a trust may be determined under any reasonable method.

#### Related trustees and the contribution limit

A beneficiary's share of contributions made to all trusts that have trustees that are related persons will be aggregated for purposes of testing the contribution limit. Trustees will be considered related if any of the following apply:

- The relationship is described in IRC Section 267 or IRC Section 707(b).
- The persons are treated as a single employer under IRC Section 52(a) or (b).
- The Franchise Tax Board (FTB) determines that treating the persons as related is necessary to prevent avoidance of this section.

## D Composite Return

A trustee may file a composite **Form 541-QFT** for all QFTs of which he or she is the trustee including QFTs that have short taxable years. Get federal Form 1041-QFT for more information.

## E When to File

For calendar year estates and trusts, file Form 541-QFT by April 15, 2008. The due date for a composite return is also April 15, 2008, even if the return includes QFTs that terminated during the year. If the QFT needs an extension of time to file and owes an unpaid tax liability, get form FTB 3563, Payment for Automatic Extension for Fiduciaries. If you are filing for a short taxable year, file Form 541-QFT by the 15th day of the 4th month following the close of the short taxable year. The QFT has an additional six months to file without filing a written request for extension. However, to avoid late payment penalties, 100% of the tax liability must be paid by the original due date of the return.

If the QFT does not file the return by the extended due date, we will impose late filing penalties and interest on any tax due from the original due date of the return.

## F Where to File

If an **amount is due** with the return, mail the return and payment to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942867  
SACRAMENTO CA 94267-0001

Make the check or money order payable to the "Franchise Tax Board." Write the QFT's federal employer identification number (FEIN) and "2007 541-QFT" on the check or money order. Do not mail cash.

All checks or money orders must be payable in U.S. dollars and drawn against a U.S. financial institution.

If there is a **refund or no amount is due**, mail the return to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
PO BOX 942840  
SACRAMENTO CA 94240-0002

## G Private Delivery Services

California conforms to federal law regarding the use of certain designated private delivery services to meet the "timely mailing as timely filing/paying" rule for tax returns and

payments. See federal Form 1041-QFT, for a list of designated delivery services. If a private delivery service is used, send the return to:

FRANCHISE TAX BOARD  
SACRAMENTO CA 95827

Private delivery services cannot deliver items to PO boxes. If using one of these services to mail any item to the FTB, **DO NOT** use an FTB PO box.

## H Who Must Sign

### Trustee

The trustee or an authorized representative must sign Form 541-QFT.

### Paid Preparer

Generally, anyone who is paid to prepare a tax return must sign the tax return and fill in the required information in the "Paid Preparer's Use Only" area of the tax return. The person required to sign the tax return must apply all of the following:

- Complete the required paid preparer information.
- Sign it in the space provided for the preparer's signature.
- Give the trustee or authorized representative a copy of the return in addition to the copy to be filed with the FTB.

## I Accounting Period

All QFTs must adopt a calendar year, even if the trust was on a fiscal year when it was a grantor trust.

## J Estimated Tax Payments

Generally, QFTs must make quarterly estimated tax payments. If they expect to owe more than \$200, get the 2008 Instructions for Form 541-ES, Estimated Tax for Fiduciaries. Use Form 541-ES to figure and pay estimated tax for the trust. Estimated tax is the amount of tax the trustee expects to owe for the year after subtracting the amount of any tax withheld and the amount of any credits.

Estimated tax liability is figured for the individual QFT, and not for a composite tax return taken as a whole.

## K Interest and Penalties

### Interest

Interest will be charged on tax not paid by the due date, even if the return is filed by the extended due date.

### Late filing of tax return

A penalty is assessed if the return is filed after the due date (including extensions), unless there was reasonable cause for filing late. The penalty is 25% if the tax return is filed after the extended due date. If the tax return is filed more than 60 days after the extended due date, the minimum penalty is \$100 or 100% of tax due on the tax return, whichever is less.

## Late payment of tax

A penalty is assessed for not paying tax by the due date unless there was reasonable cause for not paying on time. The penalty is 5% of the unpaid tax plus one-half of 1% for each month, or part of a month, that the tax is late, up to a maximum of 25%.

If a QFT is subject to both the penalty for failure to file a timely tax return and the penalty for failure to pay the total tax by the due date, a combination of the two penalties may be assessed, but the total will not exceed 25% of the unpaid tax. The late payment penalty may be waived where 90% of the tax shown on the return is paid by the original due date of the return.

If the QFT includes interest or any of these penalties with the payment, identify and enter these amounts in the bottom margin of Form 541-QFT. Do not increase the tax due on line 34 or reduce the overpaid tax on line 35 by the amount of the interest or penalty.

### Other penalties

Other penalties may be imposed for a payment returned by the QFT's bank for insufficient funds, accuracy-related matters, or fraud.

## M Attachments

If the QFT needs more space on the form or schedules, attach separate sheets showing the information in the same order as on the printed form.

Enter the QFT's FEIN on each sheet. Also, use sheets that are the same size as the forms and schedules and indicate clearly the line number of the printed form to which the information relates. Show the totals on the printed forms.

## N Miscellaneous Items

California law follows federal law in the area of accounting methods.

### Liability for tax

The trustee is liable for payment of the tax. Failure to pay the tax may result in the trustee being held personally liable. See R&TC Sections 19071 and 19516.

### Tax-exempt income

California does not tax:

- **Interest on governmental obligations.** Interest derived from bonds issued by California or its political subdivisions, the federal government, the District of Columbia (issued before December 24, 1973), or territories of the United States is not taxable by California.
- **Proceeds of insurance policies.** In general, a lump sum payable at the death of the insured under a life insurance policy is excludable from gross income of the recipient.
- **Miscellaneous items wholly exempt from tax.** (1) Gifts (not received as a consideration for services rendered) and money or property acquired by

bequest, devise, or inheritance (but the income derived therefrom is taxable); and (2) income, other than rent, derived by a lessor of real property upon the termination of a lease, representing the value of such property attributable to buildings erected or other improvements made by the lessee.

## N General Summary of Treatment for Sourcing Income Items

### Nonbusiness

- Interest and dividends generally have a source at the taxpayer's state of residence.
- Gains or losses from sale/exchange of real property and tangible personal property generally have a source where the property is located.
- Income from intangible personal property generally has a source at the taxpayer's state of residence.
- Rents and royalties generally have a source where the property is located.

### Business

- If the business, trade, or profession is conducted wholly within California, it is California source income.
- If the operations within California are so separate and distinct from the operations outside of California that taxable income can be separately accounted for, only the income from within California must be included in California source income.
- If the trade or business carried on within California is an integral part of a unitary business carried on outside of California, the entire net income must be reported and apportioned or allocated in accordance with the provisions of the Uniform Division of Income for Tax Purposes Act (R&TC Sections 25120 through 25139).

Partnership, limited liability company (LLC), and S corporation income/loss is apportioned or allocated the same as any other business. If the trust is a partner, member, or shareholder of a partnership, LLC, or S corporation, income sourced to California is generally included in column (e) of Schedules K-1 (565, 568, or 100S). For more information, refer to Cal. Code Regs., tit. 18 section 17951-4 and related tax code.

Income retained by a trust is taxable to the trust. Income from California sources is taxable regardless of the residence of the fiduciaries and beneficiaries. The taxability of non-California source income retained by a trust and allocated to principal depends on the residence of the fiduciaries and noncontingent beneficiaries, not the person who established the trust (R&TC Sections 17742 through 17745). Contingent beneficiaries are not relevant in determining the taxability of a trust. For QFT purposes, all beneficiaries are considered noncontingent beneficiaries.

Four different situations can occur when determining the taxability of a QFT.

1. If the trustee (or all the trustees, if more than one) is a California resident, the trust is taxable on all income from all sources (R&TC Section 17742).
2. If the noncontingent beneficiary (or all the noncontingent beneficiaries, if more than one) is a California resident, the trust is taxable on all income from all sources (R&TC Section 17742).
3. If the trustee is a nonresident and at least one noncontingent beneficiary is a California resident and at least one noncontingent beneficiary is a nonresident, the trust is taxable on all California source income plus the proportion of all other income that the number of California resident noncontingent beneficiaries bear to the total number of noncontingent beneficiaries (R&TC Section 17744).
4. If at least one trustee is a California resident, at least one trustee is not a California resident, and all of the trust's noncontingent beneficiaries are not California residents, the trust is taxable on all California source income plus the proportion of all other income that the number of California trustees bears to the total number of trustees.

The residence of a corporate fiduciary (trustee) of a trust means the place where the corporation transacts the major portion of its administration of the trust, R&TC Section 17742(b).

## Specific Line Instructions Identification Area

Complete the identification area with the same information used on federal Form 1041-QFT. California law is generally the same as federal law in the following areas:

- Simplified filing requirements.
- Method of reporting.
- Amended tax returns.
- Final tax returns.

If the trust is filing an amended Form 541-QFT, check the box labeled "Amended return." Complete the entire tax return, correct the appropriate line(s) with the new information and refigure the tax liability. On an attached sheet, explain the reason for the amendment(s) and identify the line(s) and amount(s) being changed on the amended tax return. Include the fiduciary's name and FEIN on each attachment.

### Private Mail Box

Include the Private Mail Box (PMB) in the address field. Write the acronym "PMB" first, then the box number. Example: 111 Main Street PMB 123.

## Tax Computation



### Line 13 – Regular tax

Determine the tax on the taxable income (line 12) using the Tax Rate Schedule on page 4 of these instructions and enter the tax on line 13.

### Line 14 – Credits

The following California tax credits are available to reduce the tax. For most credits, a separate form or certification statement must be attached to Form 541-QFT.

### Credit Name and Form Number (if any)

- Community Development Financial Institution Deposits — obtain certification from: California Organized Investment Network (COIN), Department of Insurance, 300 Capitol Mall, Suite 1600, Sacramento CA 95814
- Disabled Access for Eligible Small Businesses — FTB 3548
- Donated Agricultural Products Transportation — FTB 3547
- Employer Child Care Contribution — FTB 3501
- Employer Child Care Program — FTB 3501
- Enhanced Oil Recovery — FTB 3546
- Enterprise Zone Hiring & Sales or Use Tax — FTB 3805Z
-  Worker Housing — obtain certification from: Farmworker Housing Assistance Program, California Tax Credit Allocation Committee, 915 Capitol Mall, Room 485, Sacramento CA 95814
- Local Agency Military Base Recovery Area Hiring & Sales or Use Tax — FTB 3807
- Low-Income Housing — FTB 3521
- Manufacturing Enhancement Area Hiring — FTB 3808
- Natural Heritage Preservation Tax — FTB 3503
- Other State Tax — Schedule S
- Prior Year Alternative Minimum Tax — FTB 3510
- Prison Inmate Labor — FTB 3507
- Research — FTB 3523
-  Straw — obtain certification from: Rice Straw Tax Credit Program, Department of Food and Agriculture, 1220 N Street, Room A467, Sacramento CA 95814
- Targeted Tax Area Hiring & Sales or Use Tax — FTB 3809

### Repealed Credits

- Joint Strike Fighter Wages — FTB 3540
- Joint Strike Fighter Property Costs — FTB 3540
- Los Angeles Revitalization Zone (LARZ) Hiring or Sales & Use Tax — FTB 3806
- Solar or Wind Energy System — FTB 3540
- Salmon & Steelhead Trout Habitat Restoration — FTB 3540



## Tax and Payments

### Line 28 – Tax Liability

If the QFT owes any additional taxes (e.g., alternative minimum tax, recapture taxes, etc.), include these taxes on line 28. To the left of line 28, write the type and amount of tax. Also attach to Form 541-QFT any forms required to figure these taxes (e.g., Schedule P (541)).

### Line 29 – California income tax withheld

Include any California income tax withheld (e.g., nonresident withholding).

### Line 30 – California income tax previously paid

Use this line only if you are filing an amended tax return. Enter payments made with the original tax return plus additional tax paid after the original tax return was filed. Enter the serial numbers that the FTB stamped on the face of the canceled check(s), for each previous payment if available, in the space provided at line 30. If you did not receive a canceled check or if you made any payment(s) with a credit card, attach a statement showing the check number, the amount of the check or charge, the date posted to your account, and the name of the payee (FTB).

### Line 32 – 2007 CA estimated tax, amount applied from 2006 tax return, and payment with form FTB 3563

Enter the amount of any 2007 California estimated tax payment the estate or trust made. Also, enter the amount of any overpayment from the 2006 tax return that was applied to the 2007 estimated tax. Include payments made with form FTB 3563, Payment for Automatic Extension for Fiduciaries.

### Line 34 – Tax due

If the amount on line 28 is larger than the amount on line 33, your tax is larger than your payments and credits. Subtract line 33 from line 28. This is the amount of tax due with the tax return.

Make your check or money order payable to the "Franchise Tax Board" for the full amount you owe. Do not send cash. Be sure to write the FEIN and "2007 Form 541-QFT" on the check or money order. To help with our processing costs, enclose but **do not** attach your payment to your return.

### Line 35 – Overpaid tax

If the amount on line 28 is less than the amount on line 33, your payments and credits are larger than your tax. Subtract line 28 from line 33. This is the amount of your overpaid tax.

If the trust completed the credit recapture portion of any of the following forms:

- Form FTB 3501, Employer Child Care Program/Contribution Credit.
- Form FTB 3805Z, Enterprise Zone (EZ) Deduction and Credit Summary.
- Form FTB 3807, Local Agency Military Base Recovery Area (LAMBRA) Deduction and Credit Summary.

Include the recapture amount on line 34. Write the form number and the recaptured amount to the left of line 34.

### Line 36 – Credit to your 2008 estimated tax

Enter the amount from line 35 that you want applied to your 2008 estimated tax.

### Line 37 – Refund or no amount due

If no amount is entered on line 36, enter the amount from line 35 on line 37. This is the amount that will be refunded. If this amount is less than \$1, attach a written request to Form 541-QFT to request the refund.

### Line 42 – Underpayment of estimated tax penalty

If line 34 is \$200 or more and more than 10% of the sum of the tax on line 28, or if the QFT underpaid its 2007 estimated tax liability for any payment period, it may owe a penalty. The FTB will figure the penalty for the estate or trust and send a bill. Or, the QFT may get form FTB 5805, Underpayment of Estimated Tax by Individuals and Fiduciaries, or form FTB 5805F, Underpayment of Estimated Tax by Farmers and Fishermen, to see if it owes a penalty and to figure the amount of the penalty. If the QFT completes form FTB 5805, or form FTB 5805F, be sure to attach the form to the back of Form 541-QFT. Enter the amount of the penalty and fill in the correct circle on line 42. Complete and attach form FTB 5805 or form FTB 5805F if claiming a waiver or using the annualized income installment method.

## 2007 Tax Rate Schedule

Use this schedule to figure the tax on the QFT's taxable income (Form 541-QFT, line 12). Enter the tax on Form 541-QFT, line 13.

If the amount on Form 541-QFT, line 12 is:

Enter on Form 541-QFT, line 13:

| over — | but not over — |
|--------|----------------|
| \$ 0   | \$ 6,827       |
| 6,827  | 16,185         |
| 16,185 | 25,544         |
| 25,544 | 35,460         |
| 35,460 | 44,814         |
| 44,814 | and over       |

|          |   |      |
|----------|---|------|
| \$ 0.00  | + | 1.0% |
| 68.27    | + | 2.0% |
| 255.43   | + | 4.0% |
| 629.79   | + | 6.0% |
| 1,224.75 | + | 8.0% |
| 1,973.07 | + | 9.3% |

| of the amount over — |
|----------------------|
| \$ 0                 |
| 6,827                |
| 16,185               |
| 25,544               |
| 35,460               |
| 44,814               |